

Case Study

Riverside Farm Estates, Lee

Approved in 1986, Riverside Farm Estates was one of the first open space developments in Lee. Situated along the Lamprey River, the clustered development has a loop road connecting to both Routes 155 and 152. The 164 acre protective covenant development maintained 88 acres of open land owned by the homeowners association. The development of the former Bateman Farm protected and reserved 42 acres for agricultural use.

In Lee, cluster subdivision regulations have been in place for over 20 years. Riverside Farm was one of the first of its kind in the town. The development of Riverside Farm Estates was permitted under the town's first version of the cluster residential development ordinance, which has not been changed significantly. The developer sought to maximize the allowable density while preserving important open spaces, including quality farmland and frontage on the Lamprey River, which has since been designated a Wild and Scenic River.

Lee's cluster residential development ordinance can be applied to a parcel of 20 or more acres. An

open space development may include single-family and/or two-family dwellings. Maximum density is calculated by dividing the number of net developable acres by the conventional lot size (85,000 square feet). Net developable area is determined by subtracting road right-of-way, rivers, floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes from the total parcel area. Actual minimum lot size in the development is 21,250 square feet for single-family homes, and 55,250 square feet for two-family homes. The ordinance requires a 100-foot buffer zone around the perimeter of the development, but does not specify a minimum percentage of open space. The ordinance requires underground utilities, and allows a development to utilize community or individual water and sewer systems as appropriate. Open space must be owned by the homeowners association, and all units must have easy access to open space areas.



Principle # 4

Preserve New Hampshire's working landscape by sustaining farm and forest land and other rural resource lands to maintain contiguous tracts of open land and to minimize land use conflicts.

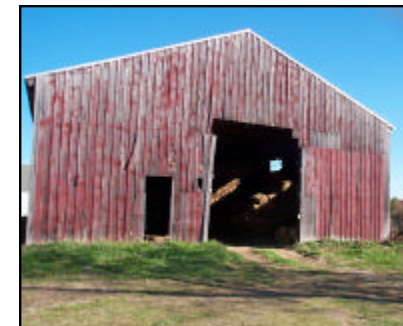
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This subdivision was approved with 82 homes. Seventeen of these homes were permitted as duplex units; however many were built as single-family dwellings. Protective covenants require all duplex designs to look like single-family homes, showing only one entrance as viewed from the road. Ten condominium units were built in accor-

dance with the town's condominium ordinance.

Each building is served by a utility box that is visually buffered by suitable landscape cover. The underground utilities run from overhead lines from the main road. Each home is served by individual well and septic.



Forty-two acres of the total open space is in farm fields reserved for agriculture. Farming rights are reserved for the owner of the lot adjacent to this open space land. This nearly four-acre lot has two barns currently used to store hay. The new owner of the farm lot has planted pumpkins, squash and corn in the fields.

John Hutton, III from Stratham has found a new home for his farming operation in this Lee subdivision, after the land he had leased in Stratham was developed as a golf course. He and his wife eventually plan to build a home on their lot, near the barns.

A parking lot adjacent to the most significant area of open space provides access to a trail along the Lamprey River.

The trail links Riverside Farm

Drive to a nine-acre wooded open space area. This open space is maintained in a natural state with a trail system for passive recreation.



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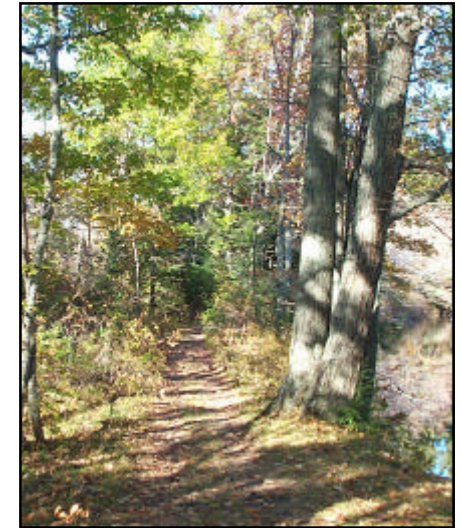
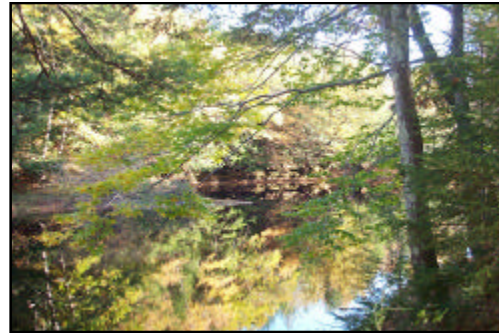
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Conservation of land is the key to maintaining the unique qualities of the Lamprey River in this rapidly developing region of the state. The River's high water quality and unspoiled scenic beauty are largely attributable to the lack of development along its shores. Natural vegetation extends for miles up the River corridor, buffering the River and

creating habitat for wildlife.

The Riverside Farm Condominium Association maintains this trail along the Lamprey River and other trails on the property. An important feature of this subdivision is the 45 acres of open space with over 1,000 feet of trail along the river.



The Lamprey River Advisory Committee and other conservation organizations provide information and technical assistance to landowners and homeowners on how they can protect the River's resources. But only acquisition of land or conservation easements on land provides long-term guarantees of land protection. Riverside

Farm Estates represents an early effort in preserving land along this significant environmental resource and protecting some of the valuable social and economic resources of the New England family farm, while using a portion of the land for residential development.

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Principle #4 Examples

The Community School, Tamworth

The Community School is a unique example of cooperative land protection and preservation. In 1992 the Perkins family sold a conservation easement on 297 acres of their 307-acre farm through the state's Land Conservation Investment Program, and then sold the protected farm to The Community School, which was founded by a group of parents and teachers. The accredited independent school for grades 6-12 has 50 students enrolled from New Hampshire's Lakes and White Mountain regions and western Maine. The School is at 1164 Bunker Hill Road (Route 113) in South Tamworth.

The Town maintains passive recreational use rights to the farm and forest lands, while the School enjoys use of the land for conservation, educational, and agricultural activities. The School operates a certified tree farm, organic vegetable gardens, and a farm stand on the land as an integral part of its educational programs.

The Town secured grant funding to acquire the Perkins Farm easement by leveraging a donated easement from Joan Cave on 700 acres of forest land. By working creatively and collaboratively the Town was able to support The Community School project while protecting over 1,000 acres of farm and forest lands within the community.



Conserved Farmland, Rollinsford

Robin Aikman permanently conserved her 280 acre Brookford Farm, a dairy farm on Sligo Road in Rollinsford. The contiguous 45 acre Ordway land on Sligo Road has also been permanently protected. The Strafford County Conservation District holds conservation easements on both properties. Conservation easements may be sold or donated, and are a voluntary tool for per-

manently protecting working open lands and lands that are valued for scenic beauty, agriculture, habitat, watershed protection, etc. Conservation easements retain land under private ownership and management, can provide financial benefits to landowners, including reduced property taxes, and may be a useful tool for business, tax, and estate planning.

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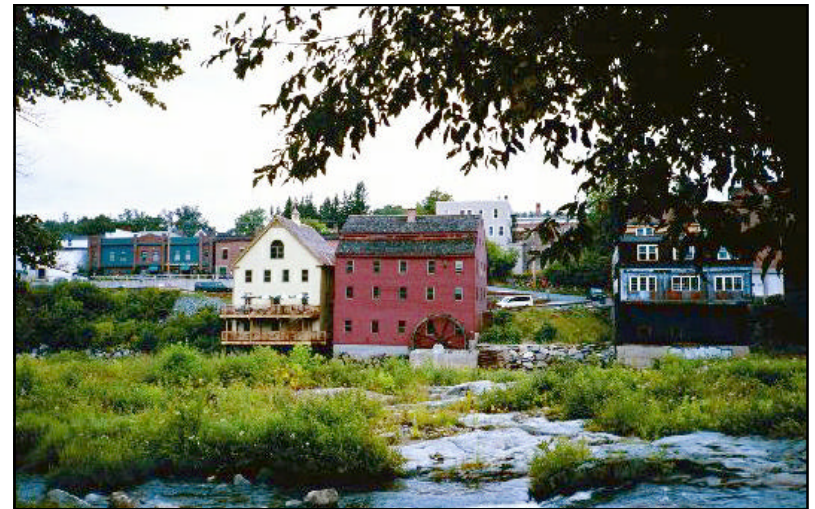
Principle #4

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Restored Grist Mill, Littleton

Historic mills that processed raw materials from farms and forests are part of the traditional landscapes of New Hampshire villages, towns, and cities. Solomon Mann's Grist Mill, built on the banks of the Ammonoosuc River in 1798 gave rise to the Town of Littleton. The Mill stands as a reminder of the agricultural roots of town development. In 1997 Ronald Murro and John and Jere Eames began renovations to the four surviving -

although badly deteriorating - original Mill buildings. Two four-foot mill-stones that may have been the originals used for grinding, were found in a stone wall further upriver. The restored Littleton Grist Mill again grinds wheat, corn, and buckwheat into flour for sale and is open to the public as a working museum. The Grist Mill is located on Mill Street, one block off Main Street, behind the Littleton Village Bookstore.



LCIP Easements, Goshen and Newbury

NH Land Conservation Investment Program conservation easements have protected over 10,000 contiguous acres of land that straddle the Monadnock-Sunapee Greenway and link Pillsbury State Park and Sunapee State Park in Goshen and Newbury. The cellar

holes, stone walls, and old roadbeds found throughout the property testify to past farm-holding and sheep-herding on the slopes of Mount Sunapee. The easement permits continued timber management, and public access for hiking and hunting.

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Moulton Farm, Meredith

The Moulton Farm on Quarry Road off Route 25 in Meredith is a third-generation, family-owned and operated working farm. The Moultons sell produce, flowers, and bedding plants grown on the Farm at their farm stand.

The Town's purchase of the development rights on 88.4 acres of Farm fields along NH Route 25 through the state's Land Conservation and Investment Program assures that the land will remain dedicated to agricultural use and permanently undeveloped.



LCIP Easement, Pittsburg

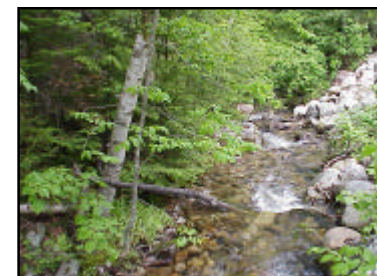
NH Land Conservation Investment Program conservation easements on the Amey Farm in Pittsburg protect over 1,500 acres of forested hills, Connecticut River and Indian Stream frontage, hillside pasture, and prime agricultural soils. The Old Hereford East Line, the former international boundary

between the United States and Canada, passes through the property. The woodland supports important habitat, a certified tree farm, and a productive sugarbush of 700 sugar maples. The farmland on the property supports a 60-cow dairy herd and a small flock of sheep.

Paul T. Doherty Memorial Town Forest, Gorham

More than 4,000 acres of forest land were purchased by the Town in 1937 to protect the town's water supply for future generations. The forest straddles the Gorham/Randolph town line and abuts the Berlin town line to the north.

The forest is a certified tree farm managed for multiple uses; a multi-use outdoor classroom, public recreation area, and timber.



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Protecting Prime Farmland Soils, Plainfield

The Town of Plainfield recognized the value of its agricultural land resource - beautiful fields of fertile loam along the Connecticut River. Plainfield has some of the best soils in New Hampshire under productive management and stewardship of the town's progressive farming community.

A town ordinance, upheld by the courts, protects these soils by requiring any development to occur at the margins of the fields, so that the land will continue to be available for farming. Riverview Farm (shown here) on River Road is one of six contiguous Plainfield farms stewarding this resource of community protected prime farmland.



The Hills at Crockett Farm, Stratham

Stratham's innovative cluster housing ordinance provides density bonus incentives for plans that preserve 50 percent or more open space, grant public pedestrian access, or protect and provide for agricultural use of valuable farm land. Clustered housing project of 23 single-family homes and 52 attached (duplex and triplex) units allows for smaller lot sizing, community water and sewer. One hundred and four acres of the total 142 acres will remain as open space, including 40 acres of wetlands and 58 acres of usable open space. Seventeen acres of fields

will remain in agricultural production, with the potential for an additional four acres. Sixteen and a half acres will become a forest management area. Forested areas and open farm fields are protected by conservation easements and surround the housing. Trails will provide for walking and horseback riding. An active recreation area will be constructed at an existing pond. Access from the corner of Chase Lane (off Route 33) and Tansy Avenue, and from Scamman Road (off High Street).